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An Information Gap

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What does Ronald Reagan plan in SALT III negotiations, which he advocated in a paid television address to the nation Sunday night?

What did he mean in speaking to the nationwide audience of "a realistic and balanced policy toward the Soviet Union?"

Does Reagan's proposal for "rapid growth" in U.S. relations with the People's Republic of China envision military cooperation or arms sales to that country?

The Republican presidential candidate did not say in the address, and his advisers either don't know or can't say what details or decisions, if any, lay behind the headline-making rhetoric.

News Analysis

This lack of information is characteristic of a campaign that has provided little in the way of details to undergird the words of the candidate, who has been insulated and protected in extraordinary fashion from questioners and questions. This scarcity of information has been particularly notable in the area of foreign policy and national security, which has become the central battleground in the final stage of the presidential race.

Does Reagan's plan for the U.S. relationship with the Third World, which he described Sunday night as "an important part of any program for peace," envision U.S.

foreign aid levels that are rising — or falling?

What does he have in mind by saying that "we must restore the ability of the CIA and other intelligence agencies" to warn against terrorism?

What does he mean by providing "the security, the incentives and the quality of life" to compensate U.S. service personnel for the sacrifices they make for the nation?

How would he provide the "margin of safety" which is "the most important of all" for securing the peace, and what would it cost?

Again, the advisers who were responsible for Reagan's address, and who briefed reporters on his "definitive statement" on national strategy, can't say what the answers are.

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